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- Address: BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA, UK, e-mail: nigel.collar@birdlife.org

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## **Proposed synonymy of *Sylvia cantillans moltonii* Orlando, 1937, with *Sylvia cantillans subalpina* Temminck, 1820**

*by Nicola Baccetti, Bruno Massa & Carlo Violani*

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*Sylvia subalpina* Temminck, 1820, was considered valid in place of *Sylvia cantillans* Pallas, 1764, for a very long time, amongst no less than eight alternative species names (cf. Salvadori 1872, Seebohm 1881, Orlando 1939). After Sherborn (1905) had reprinted Pallas's (1764) early work, *cantillans* steadily replaced *subalpina*. Temminck's name *subalpina* was based on an unpublished description

sent to him by F. A. Bonelli (Temminck 1820), director of the Natural History Museum of Turin in 1811–30. Bonelli's type (said to be unique by Temminck, 1820: 215) almost certainly never left Turin prior to it being discarded due to insect damage probably before the end of the 19th century (Whitaker 1905, Salvadori 1914). It was taken 'près de la ville de Turin,' i.e. in the environs of Turin, Piedmont, north-west Italy. Also Pallas's (1764) *cantillans*—named more than 50 years earlier in a somewhat ephemeral piece of literature (the appendix of a printed auction catalogue, cf. Rookmaaker & Pieters 2000)—was described from two (male and female) specimens (subsequently lost) obtained in Italy ('uit Italie,' no more precise details being given by Vosmaer 1764).

These are not the only names in the Subalpine Warbler's synonymic labyrinth that refer to Italian type-localities. *S. turdella* and *S. rhodogastra* were described from Sicily by Rafinesque Schmaltz (1810) so briefly as to defy identification, as shown by the contradictory opinions expressed by Salvadori (1872: xlv, 103), Trischitta (1922) and Hartert & Steinbacher (1932–38: 278). Moreover, these names have never entered practical use since their publication: we propose that they are best considered as invalid and unavailable. *Sylvia leucopogon* Meyer, 1822, is an available younger synonym of *S. cantillans*, and was also coined for a Sicilian specimen, subsequently lost according to Hartert (1910). *Sylvia cantillans moltonii* Orlando, 1937, eventually joined the list, to identify Sardinian breeders. The latter subspecies did not meet with favour for nearly 50 years, being considered identical to nominate birds (Vaurie 1959, Williamson 1968, Cramp 1992, Svensson 1992), despite differences in call between Corsica and the French mainland (Cramp 1992 and references therein). More recently, plumage features matching Orlando's (1937, 1939) descriptions, as well as vocal and moult peculiarities, were observed in the recently established Balearic population, compared to Spanish mainland birds (Gargallo 1994). The race *moltonii*—with its north-west Mediterranean insular distribution—was, therefore, fully rehabilitated and even considered a possible allospecies (Shirihai *et al.* 2001).

Separation of insular and mainland forms was less straightforward in the Italian range. The Turin type of Temminck's *subalpina*, a male (Savi 1825, *contra* Temminck 1820), was described as having the underparts 'd'une belle couleur vineuse' ('of a beautiful vinous colour'), matching one of the main features of *moltonii* (Orlando 1937, 1939, Gargallo 1994, Shirihai *et al.* 2001). Savi (1825, 1827–31), the first author to give complete descriptions of Subalpine Warbler's plumages and behaviour from field experience in the north Italian mainland, mentioned the typical call (likening it to a Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*) and its puzzling primary moult, apparently being undertaken also in winter—two more of the alleged characters of *moltonii*. More recently, Cova (1976), Festari *et al.* (2002) and Brambilla *et al.* (in press) concluded that *moltonii* also breeds throughout the northern Italian mainland.

That *moltonii*'s range in continental Italy is broad and reaches the area where the type of *subalpina*—and possibly even of *cantillans*—were collected, poses some

problems for current nomenclature. The simplest and least disruptive solution, which we propose here, is that *S. cantillans moltonii* should be regarded as a junior synonym of *S. c. subalpina*. This is supported by Bonelli's description (in Temminck 1820) of the underparts of *subalpina* and by the large numbers with Wren-like calls that Savi (1827–30) heard as early as 1810–30 along the entire coast of Tuscany and in eastern Liguria (i.e. adjacent to Piedmont). Turin itself was probably then—as well as now (Mingozzi *et al.* 1988, Meschini & Frugis 1993, Hagemeyer & Blair 1997)—on the very edge of the species' breeding range. In this scenario, the male *cantillans* syntype, which Pallas (1764) described as 'subtus testacea' (i.e. terracotta colour below, and not vinous pink) can be regarded either as a breeder from the 'non-*subalpina*' sector of the Italian range (i.e. roughly from Rome south: Brambilla *et al.* in press), or as a migrant of unknown origin on passage. The alternative solution, mooted by Roselaar (in Shirihai *et al.* 2001), is to place *moltonii* in the synonymy of the nominate, based on the Italian origin of Pallas's syntypes. This would probably create a less clear understanding of the rearrangement proposed here; would contradict the underparts coloration recorded by Pallas (1764); and imply an arbitrary decision concerning the origin of *cantillans*, considering that more than one race is present on the Italian mainland. Characterisation of southern Italian and Sicilian populations, however, will probably require further taxonomic adjustments and perhaps designation of neotypes.

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- Addresses:* Dr N. Baccetti, INFS, via Ca' Fornacetta 9, I-40064 Ozzano Emilia BO, Italy, e-mail: nicola.baccetti@infs.it. Prof. Bruno Massa, Dipartimento SENFIMIZO, Università di Palermo, viale delle Scienze, I-90128 Palermo PA, Italy, e-mail: zoolappl@mail.unipa.it. Dr Carlo Violani, Dipartimento Biologia Animale, Università di Pavia, piazza Botta 9, I-27100 Pavia PV, Italy, e-mail: carlo.violani@unipv.it

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## Taxonomic status and distribution of Mangrove Black Hawk *Buteogallus (anthracinus) subtilis*

by William S. Clark

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Mangrove Black Hawk was described, by Thayer & Bangs (1905), as *Urubitinga subtilis*, from two specimens taken on Gorgona Island, off south-west Colombia. The adult appeared very similar to adult Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* but was smaller, had a larger white patch at the base of the outer primaries, and the ground colour of the secondaries was bright cinnamon-rufous (the secondaries of adult Common Black Hawk are greyish, often tinged rufous). Swann (1920) erroneously listed *subtilis* as a race of Great Black Hawk *B. urubitinga*; subsequently, he corrected this by listing it as a race of Common Black Hawk (Swann 1922, 1930). Chapman (1926) likewise treated *subtilis* as a race of Common Black Hawk and gave its range as 'southern Ecuador to eastern Panama.' Peters (1931), however, considered it a separate species and gave the range as